

News

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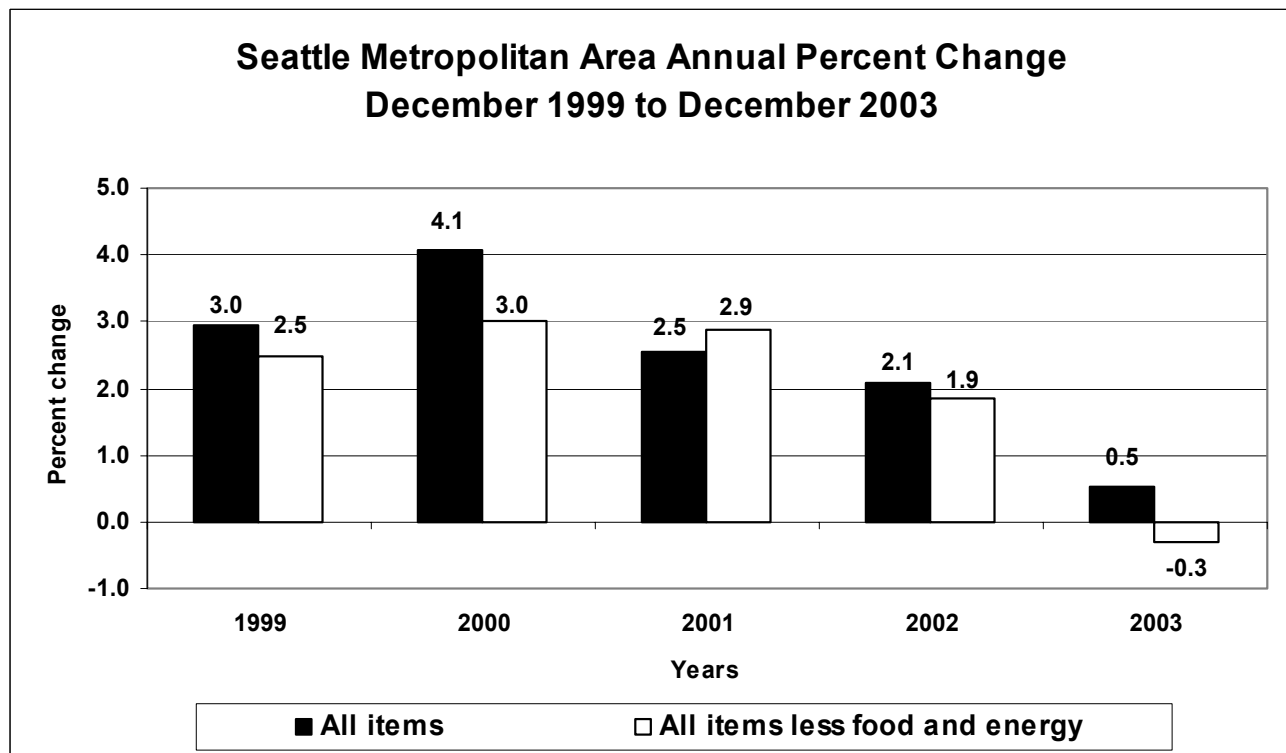
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SEATTLE-TACOMA-BREMERTON AREA CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES: DECEMBER 2003

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported consumer prices in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton area decreased 1.4 percent for the two months ending December 2003. According to the Bureau's Acting Regional Commissioner, Nancy Treadwell, lower housing and transportation prices were the primary reasons for the latest two month decrease. From December 2002 to December 2003, overall prices increased 0.5 percent. Over the same period, the all items less food and energy index decreased 0.3 percent. The twelve month decrease in all items less food and energy is unusual but not unprecedented. In May of 1983, the all items less food and energy also declined 0.3 percent from the previous year. Local area Consumer Price Index (CPI) data are not seasonally adjusted.



The housing index decreased 1.3 percent for the two months ending December and during the past 12 months decreased 0.9 percent. Shelter, which is comprised of rent of primary residence, owners' equivalent rent of primary residence and lodging away from home, fell 1.6 percent over the two month period. Household furnishings and operations contributed to the bi-monthly decrease in housing, declining 0.7 percent. Over the year, household furnishings and operations were down 4.1 percent.

Gasoline prices led the decline in overall transportation in December, falling 4.3 percent for the month and 8.0 percent for the two-month period. Over the two-month period, transportation fell 2.5 percent. All published annual changes in the transportation category were positive. While gasoline prices were up 10.6 percent over the twelve-month period, private transportation was up a smaller 0.8 percent. The December to December change for the overall transportation category was 1.2 percent.

Apparel prices fell 5.6 percent from October to December. An October to December price decline has occurred in this consumer category for each of the past six years. The 12-month change for apparel was down 3.2 percent. Compared to five years ago (December 1998), apparel prices averaged 3.3 percent less.

The education and communication index climbed 0.5 percent for the two months ending December. Over the year, the index has increased 4.5 percent.

Medical care prices moved up a modest 0.1 percent this latest two-month period but during the past 12 months the rose 3.5 percent.

The recreation index declined 1.4 percent since October. The recreation index was also lower for the year by 2.3 percent.

During the past two months, the other goods and services index decreased 0.5 percent. Over the past year, the category advanced 2.0 percent.

The All Items, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area for December 2003 is 191.0 (1982-84=100). This means a market basket of goods and services that cost \$100.00 in 1982-84 would have cost \$191.00 in December 2003.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request.

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Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods

Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Dec. 2002	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003
Expenditure category						
All items	193.7	-	191.0	0.5	-1.4	-
All items (1967=100)	590.4	-	582.2	-	-	-
Food and beverages	193.2	-	191.8	2.7	-0.7	-
Food	194.5	-	192.9	2.7	-0.8	-
Food at home	196.3	197.0	192.8	2.4	-1.8	-2.1
Food away from home	193.8	-	195.1	3.1	0.7	-
Alcoholic beverages	180.2	-	180.8	2.6	0.3	-
Housing	200.7	-	198.0	-0.9	-1.3	-
Shelter	219.6	217.2	216.1	-0.7	-1.6	-0.5
Rent of primary residence ¹	207.9	207.6	207.6	-0.9	-0.1	0.0
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1) (2)	225.2	225.2	225.3	-0.4	0.0	0.0
Fuels and utilities	159.1	-	159.1	1.5	0.0	-
Fuels	160.1	159.9	160.1	0.7	0.0	0.1
Gas (piped) and electricity ¹	191.1	191.1	191.1	-0.2	0.0	0.0
Electricity (1)	199.9	199.9	199.9	-7.7	0.0	0.0
Utility natural gas service ¹	142.3	142.3	142.3	32.2	0.0	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	173.5	-	172.2	-4.1	-0.7	-
Apparel	127.6	-	120.4	-3.2	-5.6	-
Transportation	168.2	-	164.0	1.2	-2.5	-
Private transportation	173.6	-	168.5	0.8	-2.9	-
Motor fuel	180.5	173.7	166.3	10.6	-7.9	-4.3
Gasoline (all types)	184.2	177.0	169.4	10.6	-8.0	-4.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular ³	200.3	192.3	183.8	10.7	-8.2	-4.4
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ³ ⁴	143.5	138.3	131.9	10.0	-8.1	-4.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium ³	166.5	160.1	154.6	9.6	-7.1	-3.4
Medical care	283.0	-	283.3	3.5	0.1	-
Recreation ⁵	100.9	-	99.5	-2.3	-1.4	-
Education and communication ⁵	113.4	-	114.0	4.5	0.5	-
Other goods and services	306.4	-	304.8	2.0	-0.5	-

See footnotes at end of table.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods

Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton, WA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (Continued)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Dec. 2002	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003
Commodity and service group						
All items	193.7	-	191.0	0.5	-1.4	-
Commodities	164.4	-	160.8	-0.5	-2.2	-
Commodities less food and beverages	148.6	-	143.7	-2.8	-3.3	-
Nondurables less food and beverages	156.3	-	149.1	-1.0	-4.6	-
Durables	138.3	-	136.6	-5.7	-1.2	-
Services	221.4	-	219.6	1.2	-0.8	-
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	189.5	-	186.7	0.4	-1.5	-
All items less shelter	184.7	-	182.3	1.1	-1.3	-
Commodities less food	149.7	-	145.0	-2.7	-3.1	-
Nondurables	174.2	-	170.0	1.1	-2.4	-
Nondurables less food	157.6	-	151.0	-0.7	-4.2	-
Services less rent of shelter ²	229.8	-	230.1	3.6	0.1	-
Services less medical care services	216.4	-	214.3	0.9	-1.0	-
Energy	172.0	168.2	164.3	5.8	-4.5	-2.3
All items less energy	197.6	-	195.2	0.2	-1.2	-
All items less food and energy	198.3	-	195.8	-0.3	-1.3	-

¹ This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series converted to a geometric means estimator in January, 1999.

² Index is on a December 1982=100 base.

³ Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

⁴ Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

⁵ Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.